RRR
ROTHBARD-ROCKWELL REPORT
August 1996 Volume VII, Number 8

The Death of the Two-Party Cartel

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

The elites thought they had us. Dole v. Clinton. That's your choice: live with it. Ain't democracy grand? But such a fate would not only be evil, since both candidates are stalking horses for rival factions of the welfare/warfare power elite, it would also be terribly boring. Who could possibly care whether this or that social democratic creep gets to be president?

But, glory be, all that has begun to change. Of course, the power elite will probably get its man at the end. But in the meantime, we are going to have loads of fun. If all goes well, this will be the beginning of the end for the two-party system. The horse race is on, and, if the pack runs hard and fast, the two out front could get trampled. That will leave the next president, probably Slick Willie, the weakest chief executive in this century.

Funneling for Power

Democracy's a racket, to be sure. But the one thing the elites can't entirely control (yet) is what people actually do in the voting booth (vote fraud being a fairly risky game). For that reason, the management of elections has required the power elite to carefully manipulate public opinion in the establishment's favor. The goal is to funnel people's voting preferences into candidates who have the government's seal of approval.

When the Cold War was on, this was tricky but doable. A huge foreign policy drama was being played out every day. The real or imagined threat of nuclear war usually trumped domestic issues.

Thus a Republican candidate could rule like a socialist on domestic matters, but so long as he stood up to the Soviets, he could continue to win voter support, or least keep revolts at bay. The Left was similarly diverted from its domestic priorities toward keeping a war hawk away from the nuclear button. All other issues were sideshows.

But this was not the only method of funneling used by the power elite. Since at least the mid-1980s, conservatives have been told that they must never vote third party because the Supreme Court was at stake. Weeks before every election, party officials would start wild rumors that two, three, or four justices were on the death beds.

If the Democrat wins, we were told, he'll appoint horrible justices who will then engage in evil deeds, like refusing to overturn Roe v. Wade. This method of vote funneling usually worked, since everyone decent wants the Court to cease being a plaything of the Left, and actually start enforcing the Constitution.

These days, funneling is more difficult. Try as it might, the power elite has not been able to manufacture a foreign policy crisis with sufficient psychological power to funnel people's political preferences into conventional modes. Lord knows they've tried: the Iraqi threat,

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P.C. Watch

Brotherhood

When a tall, heavyset black man entered a woman's hat shop in Los Angeles, the tiny Korean owner told him: "No men. No men. Women only. Women only." This was a blatant act of racism, says the Rev. Lee May, directed against him as a black male, and within a few days he organized 30 other black males from the "Brotherhood Crusade" to enter the store in protest. Since that day, the owner, 53-year In-Suk Lee—who also refused to unlock the door for the men—has not reopened the store.

She apologized in a letter to the minister, explaining that he had made the four women customers—two Korean and two black—nervous. But that was insufficient. He and the Brotherhood Crusade demanded a public meeting, at which she would be culturally "sensitized" to dealing with black men as well as make an apology.

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Mrs. Lee's minister, the Rev. Sang-Won Shin, explained that she did not speak English very well, was tired of running a small business in a "tough" neighborhood, and had had her previous store burned down in the Los Angeles riots. There was also the problem of the Brotherhood Crusade's demand. "Koreans avoid confrontations," Shin said, "even among ourselves. For a woman of Mrs. Lee's age and background to meet face-to-face with non-Korean males in this context is unthinkable." Rather than submit, Mrs. Lee has permanently closed her business.

It's a crime not to deliver pizza to black areas.

Pizzalining

When William Fobbs, who lives in a "tough, predominantly black" neighborhood in San Francisco tried to order a pizza from Domino's, the company refused to deliver. Too many of its deliverers have been robbed, beaten up, and even killed in black neighborhoods. So naturally, the city passed a new law making the refusal to deliver a pizza to black areas a crime. Fobb's grandmother, Willie Kennedy, who's on the board of supervisors, says this is necessary because the only reason for non-delivery is "racism." Domino's is resisting, however, in part because OSHA forbids it to put its employees into dangerous situations without their consent. It even supplies software to its local stores that flag addresses as green (delivery ok), yellow (curbside delivery only), and red (no delivery). But this is naturally denounced as racism too. Watch for a national law against "pizza redlining" (*Wall Street Journal*, 7-10-96).

Murderapolis

Minneapolis, formerly a safe city, now has a much worse murder rate than New York. "What is happening to my Minneapolis?" asks Barbara Atlas. "This was a place where you left your door unlocked." Now it's home to drug gangs, drive-by shootings, and carjackings, not to speak of muggings and armed robberies. Why? "They call Minnesota 'Money State,'" says Mrs. Atlas, who is black. "They come here for the welfare and they bring all their problems with them." Nonsense, says Emmett Carson, president of the Minneapolis Foundation. "Welfare recipients have been made scapegoats," he adds. "Welfare mothers don't commit drive-by shootings." What about their sons? That was unaddressed by Mr. Carson, who adds, "This is not your grandfather's Minneapolis." Duh, one might reply. (*New York Times*, 6-30-96).

Hate Crimes

Anti-Christianism is the fastest growing "prejudice." Recently, satanists desecrated cemeteries in four French cities, pulling bodies from graves in Toulon and Dunkirk. At the other cities, "tombs were defaced with anti-Christian graffiti and tomb crosses have been broken or turned upside down." This astounding news was buried in a *New York Times* story (6-20-96) headlined "Europe Scrutinizes Sects."

Fakeroos

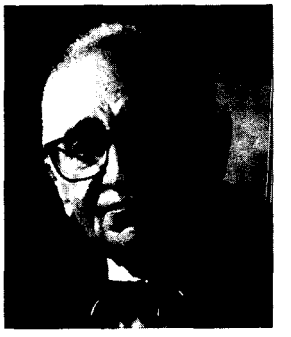
How many of the nationally and internationally trumpeted hate crimes are phony? You have to read the local papers to find out. When someone spray painted the word "Niggers" on the garage of a black home in Traverse City, Mich., it was big news. Housing integration opposed by racists! When it turned out that two black children, aged 11 and 9, had done it, you had to read the *Traverse City Record-Eagle* (6-5-96) to find out. Of course, it was still the white man's fault. The children only did it, according to their mother, because they had "experienced racism."

Thesaurus Crimes

Microsoft has issued an apology to Mexico for its Spanish-language computer thesaurus for Word for Windows 6.0. If you entered "Indian," suggested synonyms included "cannibal" and "savage." If you entered "Western" in the Spanish-language program gave "Aryan," "white," and "civilized" as alternatives. Lesbian led to "pervert" and "depraved person." Microsoft promised to have a corrected program in six weeks (Reuters, 7-8-96).

A Quest Completed

The "classic" cartoon series, "Johnny Quest," turns out to be racist, according to the *Washington Post* (5-29-95). Each episode ended with this trailer shot: "Africans, in skins and feather head wear, gesture with crude instruments, and murmur unintelligibly,



Dean of the Austrian School of economics, founder of modern libertarianism, and restorer of the Old Right, Murray N. Rothbard (1926-1995) was a one-man army of liberty. The *RRR* is inspired by his spirit, and dedicated to his vision.

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something like 'wooga-booga-ayaa-agaa.' Their hurled spears clink futilely against the door of the sleek jet spiriting away 11-year-old Johnny."

Thank goodness the new program, being made by Turner Home Entertainment, has made Hadji, Johnny's hitherto "complacent" Indian sidekick, "more assertive"; the villainous Dr. Zin no longer looks "brown and evil" but rather "ugly and evil"; a "competent" girl is now part of the team; and so is a black man, commander of a racially integrated military-intelligence unit. Most important, there are no spears.

Freedom vs. License

How wonderful, says the *Washington Post* (6-5-96), that out-of-fashion ideas can still be represented in a bookstore. Few Americans are interested in Marxism-Leninism any more, but if they are, they can go to Pathfinder, a communist shop in the Adams-Morgan area of D.C. run by a brilliant woman intellectual who eschews profits for principle. The easy availability of unpopular ideas: isn't that what democracy is all about? Except, that is, when the Redneck Shop in Laurel, South Carolina, carries KKK literature (*WP*, 5-30-96). Owned by a stupid man, who is running it not as a business, but as a propaganda emporium, the shop has been rightly vandalized.

Troubling Intolerance

To Carrie Rodd, "innocuous things" like "cutting her hair very short, holding hands with her girlfriend" at her high school in San Francisco are "natural expression of herself as a lesbian teenager." But even in that city, such students "continue to suffer the stings of intolerance." Boys "stare, laugh, sometimes mumble slurs." It is even more difficult for "queer youth of color" (*New York Times*, 5-19-96).

Wealthism

Despite the Cambridge, Massachusetts, school system's "nationally renowned" race balancing, "schools are segregated between rich and poor." Said one official: "The nation that we are preparing these students for is going to be even more pluralistic than it is today. We do them a disservice if we educate them in homogeneous settings." So students will now be bused for income-mixing reasons as well (*Boston Globe*, 5-5-96).

The Torch Scam

On May 8, 1996, a biker carrying the Olympic torch across a bridge in Washington state fell down, extinguishing the flame. The "ancient symbol of the Olympic Games" was immediately relit, whether from the original "living flame," as claimed, or a Zippo, remains unclear.

But just how ancient is this symbol? The ceremony was created by Adolf Hitler's favorite filmmaker, Leni Riefenstahl, for the Berlin games in 1936. Chemists from the Krupp armaments works designed the magnesium torches, and Riefenstahl arranged the lighting ceremony on Mount Olympus to begin the movie she was making of the games. She was only frustrated when the Greek peasant boys bearing the torch on its first leg refused to run naked, as in ancient Greece (London *Times*, 5-9-96). ■

Dole even tried to bring back the Russian threat.

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the North Korean threat, the Japanese threat, the Chinese threat, the terrorist threat. Dole even tried to bring back the Russian threat in his only major foreign speech since announcing his candidacy.

The power elite tried to keep the left in line by using the warfare state for humanitarian ends: guns as a means of delivering butter to the world. Thus the poor suffering souls in Somalia had to be saved. Haiti needed democracy in the form of a drug-crazed voodoo socialist. The Hutus and the Tutsis in Rwanda needed deep therapy and conflict resolution training.

The left has been gullible about these tricks so long as the UN was involved. Even so, the Left will never warm up to military culture enough to let internationalist humanitarianism divert them from their first priority of bringing full-scale socialism to America.

One additional factor helped funnel presidential votes into approved channels in 1992: the fear of Clinton. Despite the lack of enthusiasm for Bush among Republican voters, they backed him anyway in order to keep the Draft Dodger out of office.

But the same election year, the neocon empire (*Commentary*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Heritage*, *National Review*, etc.) turned its guns on Bush personally. Ostensibly, this was because he raised taxes (although Reagan did too), thus enlisting economic libertarians.

In fact, the neocons were—as usual—engaged in deception. It wasn't Bush's taxes they hated; it was his refusal to succumb to their model Mid-East policy, and, crucially, his additional refusal to give them jobs, contracts, and prominence during his term in office.

The real reason Bush lost had nothing to do with neocon opposition, however. The man who put Bill Clinton in office, with only a plurality in the popular vote, was Ross Perot, whom the elites hate and fear the most. It was his candidacy, his ability to garner support from one

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in five voters—even after his temporary pull-out—that began the demolition of the two-party system.

The System Breaks Down

It was a remarkable moment in post-war political history, although it is virtually never described that way. The spin has been that the Perot phenomenon was a fluke, a function of his money and temporary voter stupidity. The media have engaged in a four-year long effort to discredit him and his movement, with the *Weekly Standard* leading the effort with hysterical anti-Perot cover stories. The hope is that if they can take him out of the game, everything will get back to "normal," meaning two nominees and no real choice.

The Clintons should not only be toppled, but exiled to live in Cuba with the former president of Mexico.

Fat chance. This year, all these funneling techniques are, in government parlance, non-operational. No foreign policy issue is large enough to mesmerize the public. The Supreme Court is not going to change composition anytime soon. And, at the same time, the public remains deeply dissatisfied with the state of affairs.

Most importantly, the two conventional candidates have barely managed to distinguish themselves on issues. It's possible that Clinton could manage to run to Dole's right this year, on immigration, race, welfare, and even crime. Clinton's ads have already hit Dole for being Mr. Tax Increase.

Meanwhile, the people who hate Clinton but don't like Dole (or vice versa) make up as much as two-thirds of the electorate. They feel they have no great interest in electing one of these two birds; neither alternative is going to bring a smile to their faces. Ominously — from the power elite's standpoint—that frees them up to vote for other candidates.

In 1996, there will be more credible choices on the ballot than in the last 50 years. The power elite was barely able to handle the Ross Perot problem, and it has poured enormous resources into damaging him personally (including, quite possibly, spooking him with doctored photos, just prior to her marriage, of his daughter "with" a woman). But how can the media handle two, three, or even five or six, credible alternatives to Clinton-Dole? At some point, the tactic doesn't work.

There are four demographic wild cards that may choose to go third party this year: the greens, the Christian right, the overtaxed suburban moderns, and the blue-collar working class. Each group may have its own candidate this year. And with new modes of communication—including talk radio, the Internet, proliferating cable channels, and alternative newspapers and newsletters—the candidates stand a chance of getting a hearing on their own terms.

Four More Years?

I have no illusions that a third-party candidate will win the presidency—not this year at any rate. Unless something dramatic happens to the Dole camp, Clinton is going to be president again. And, oddly, just about every Republican I know is willing to put up with another four years of Bill Clinton. No one thinks Dole is any great shakes.

Dole may even be worse: he is more a creature of Washington, is more of a militarist, has more to answer for, and knows the way the legislative gears work. A united government—with Congress and the executive run by today's Republicans—could prove to be worse than four more years of divided government.

After all, Clinton would enter office as seriously damaged goods. And scorn heaped on him will extend beyond the man to the office, and from the office to the system at large. Another Clinton term offers the prospect of discrediting the power elite itself. The Congress, when it's not up to no good itself, is capable of holding him at bay. Better to have a weak president than one who believes he has a voter mandate to do evil.

After four years of Clinton, we hate him so much, we've almost begun to enjoy it. He's been subjected to a steady steam of damning books and revelations, linking him and Hillary to every manner of depravity, including cocaine use and trafficking, harlotry, bribery, theft, and murder.

The magnificent *Partners in Power* by Roger Morris may be the most damaging book ever written about a sitting president. If even one third of this book is true—and I have no doubt that virtually all of it is—the Clintons should not only be toppled, but exiled to live in Cuba with the former president of Mexico.

Morris details Clinton's involvement in the CIA's drug-running operation at the Mena airport, and provides the most coherent explanation yet of his looting of the Madison Guaranty S&L. A picture emerges of a man of no principles driven exclusively by his desire for power, and a pathological demand for frequent sex with a multitude of different women.

The reason the book is not receiving any public attention, and indeed was condemned by the *Weekly Standard*: it indicts not only Clinton, but brings modern democracy itself into question. In short, any country headed by this man has the wrong system of government.

The president is also tormented

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by the major sector of the electorate, independent of Morris's allegations, who hate him utterly and don't believe a word he says. We on the right sometimes forget that anti-Clintonism also exists on the left.

Leftists see Clinton as a betrayer. That's true among the greens, the black rights people, the welfarists, the hard-core socialists, etc. They see him as a closet corporate "conservative" for his support of Nafta and Gatt, and his talk of tax cuts and balancing the budget. Though they don't in fact have much to complain about, it's great to see their coalition fracturing.

Many on the left feel strong enough about this to back Ralph Nader, who plans to run a left-populist campaign for president. He has said he will stay away from consumer issues, and focus on getting out of trade agreements and cleaning up the political process. Also on the left is the Natural Law Party, a New Age outfit that thinks mass communion with nature will relieve our political problems. This movement is loopy, but it should be encouraged on the grounds that it is another stick with which to beat the two parties. Maybe they'll even get Hillary's vote.

Dole's Trouble

Despite winning the nomination, Dole's stature in the Republican Party has been on the decline since he beat back Clinton's "stimulus" package, his political high-water mark. After that, his conservative masquerade ended. Republicans of all stripes privately complain that he was primarily responsible for scuttling the chance to make something of the November 1994 Congressional victory. Gingrich, of course, is the real culprit, but Dole shares the blame.

And, in retrospect, it was a terrible mistake for Dole to leave the Senate, which he did only after the experts told him it was his only choice. While Majority Leader, he at least he carried the aura of power and people hung on his words. Now a mere citizen, he is dramatically reduced in stature, and seems unable to make the news on his own terms. Without the power of the majority leadership, he now appears as he is in fact: a bitter old man with no ideals, no principles, no passion, and a deeply dishonest look in his eye.

Activist Christians have been among the most loyal of all Republicans since their entry into politics in the 1970s. In the past, Dole could have depended on their support. Reagan and Bush assured their backing by making perfunctory appeals for the pro-life vote, while never actually doing anything to advance the agenda. The pro-lifers have long been the lap-dogs of the Republican Party. But this year, their owner is treating them with much less respect.

Dole has not made a single compelling statement against abortion, not being willing to say even the bare minimum necessary to assuage pro-lifers' guilt for voting for such an unprincipled man. His support for the pro-life plank in the platform (a meaningless symbol, at any rate) has been perfunctory at best. Meanwhile, he backed a silly "tolerance" plank saying that pro-abortion people are great guys too. In this, Dole is being true to his nature: the abortion plank was the only unequivocated and uncontradicted part of the platform.

Bob Dole is a bitter old man with no ideals, no principles, no passion, and a deeply dishonest look in his eye.

Dole's advisors begged him to let matters be on abortion, especially after Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council agreed to accept a generic "tolerance" statement in the preamble. But Dole wouldn't let well enough alone. He shot back that he wants the new plank tied specifically to abortion, and then attacked Bauer personally. Further, Dole said, it doesn't matter to him what his VP's position on abortion is.

He might just as well have told pro-lifers to jump in the Potomac. For all Dole's vaunted "experience" and "strategic planning" garnered from his Senate days, he is handling this issue with utmost stupidity. Even an outsider could have told him that he can't afford to tick off the Christian right on abortion. Some nine million votes are at stake on this and allied issues.

So Dole switched again, this time backing an entirely separate tolerance plank, but one that is still deeply offensive. Not only does it imply that pro-lifers who are opposed to tolerance are guilty of "hatred and bigotry," it calls the American people "the greatest force for good the world has ever seen." Now I'm all for the American people, but that statement is blasphemous.

If this keeps up, and Dole picks a pro-choice running mate, the best that could happen from his standpoint is that a number of these voters stay home. Not even the Supreme Court is at stake in this election: after all, Dole backed Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the most viciously liberal member of the court.

Read the little Trotskyite's hate-filled opinion on the Virginia Military Institute, and you begin to understand her malice towards limited government, federalism, the values of average people, and the good society in general. Remember Lotte Lenya, the female Smersh agent in the James Bond movie, "From Russia With Love"? That's Ruthie.

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The Christian Party

Staying home is one way the Christian right can protest the "choice" of Dole or Clinton, but it is not the most effective one. What this country needs is another party that accepts their values. They believe that the cultural issues are of primary importance, and, among them, abortion is number one. After that comes family breakup, the government-Hollywood war on Christianity, and the collapse of morals encouraged by the political, media, and intellectual classes.

Liberals have consistently underestimated the power of this message, especially since we are living through what may be another Great Awakening of mass conversions and recommitments to evangelical Christianity. Very few have bothered to mention this, especially not in the media, precisely because it has profound implications for party politics.

It is big government, especially the federal government, that is the enemy of the Old Republic and its moral code.

The *RRR* has long advocated making cultural issues part of a more comprehensive political movement that is solidly anti-government across the board. It is big government, we have tried to explain, especially the federal government, that is the enemy of the Old Republic and its moral code. The Christian right's agenda should dovetail perfectly with the that of gun owners, land owners, and middle-class taxpayers generally.

But the goal of a united anti-government movement certainly does not preclude the establishment of various parties reflecting different priorities within the broader movement. A separate political party—say, the Christian Republicans—is the perfect way for the Christian right to avoid the trap of retreatism in the face of Dole's taunting. But that also raises practical difficulties. What is to be the political vehicle? Is there a third-party structure that can be used? Is there a candidate? How can Dole and the Republican establishment be taught a lesson they won't forget?

What About Pat?

Ever since Dole clinched the nomination, Howard Phillips of the U.S. Taxpayers Party has been courting Pat Buchanan to run on his ticket. Pat initially toyed with the idea, and sent questionnaires to his contributors soliciting their opinions.

Is Pat right for Howard's ticket? It's true that Pat veered far from Howard's hard-line anti-government platform during the campaign. That raised some questions among Howard's biggest supporters. But, as Howard reported to many, he would do his best to overlook Pat's industrial-planning heresies until someone better came along.

If Pat did run on the Taxpayers ticket, he would have a major effect. But as Bob Dole knows, it will never happen. Pat is committed to the Republican Party, which he has called "our family." Most important, he believes that his only path to the White House—which he regards as his destiny—lies through the party structure. Rather than leave, he wants to take it over.

In recent press interviews in London, Pat warned the Euroskeptics in the Conservative Party not to leave and join Sir James Goldsmith's new Referendum Party, although he agrees with Goldsmith's anti-trade stance. Pat obviously had himself in mind when he told the right-wing of the Tory party not to bolt. More to the point, Pat also told the London *Times* that he will be the Republican nominee in 2000.

Ironically, all this places Pat in Dole's hands. For, as the party elites know, Pat believes he must support his fellow Nixon Republican for president. That's why Dole can deny him the "prime-time speaking slot" that Pat's staff talks about as if it were some world-historic issue. To Pat, anything but a Dole endorsement would taint his otherwise inevitable march to the Republican nomination in four years. Regardless of whether Pat's analysis is correct, he believes it to be correct, and therefore cannot leave the party, or even sit out the election.

Run, Jim, Run!

For that reason, Howard Phillips has recently been visiting with James Dobson, easily the most powerful and respected man in Christian America. He has a deservedly loyal following among millions of people. His organization—Focus on the Family—is twice as big as the Christian Coalition's, and his radio audience is larger than Rush Limbaugh's. And he's got an active mailing list of 3.5 million genuine supporters.

Dobson's influence on American family life is huge (his books on child rearing outsell Dr. Spock's). And his political influence is formidable. Two years ago, he heroically killed an education bill that would have endangered home schooling. The Capitol switchboard received more than one million phone calls. Dobson, a man of firm principles, obviously has deep skepticism toward government, even if we do not yet know his opinions on economic issues in general.

The great news is that Dobson is fed up with Dole's condescension towards the Christian right. He has been highly critical in private. And in public, his aides have been blunt. Tom Minnery, Dobson's head of public policy, has speculated that

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another Clinton term might be the lesser of two evils. Another Dobson executive has blasted the smarmy Ralph Reed.

Justly so. Despite his protests, Reed might as well be a paid employee of the Dole campaign. He fancies himself a power broker who can deliver millions of vote, and even conned the Dole forces into believing it. The trouble for Reed is that he's now trapped. His credibility, and that of the organization he heads, rest on Dole, a shaky foundation. And if the Christian right dumps Dole for Dobson, then Reed's power and prestige vanish—one of many happy results of a Dobson candidacy.

Conservatives who have yet to develop an appropriate disdain for Reed should pick up his newest book, *Active Faith*. In it, he praises the Social Gospel movement that—while undermining faith in Christ—brought us the income tax, World War I, prohibition, the New Deal, and the welfare state. He smears the great theologian R.J. Rushdoony—the intellectual fountainhead of modern Christian activism—as a totalitarian, when he is really a libertarian federalist. And surely no book has slathered as much praise on the rotten Martin Luther King.

Most recently, Reed made the headlines by seizing on the church fire hysteria, a hoax dreamed up by hate-filled liberals to beat up on Southern whites. Reed used the occasion to "repent" for all of us who didn't back the commie civil-rights movement in the sixties.

If James Dobson accepted Howard Phillips's invitation and became a third-party contender for president, American politics would be transformed overnight. The Republican Party would split down the middle and fly into its death throes. Of course, Dobson couldn't win, but think about it: he could garner at least 10 percent and as much as 20 percent of the electorate, all else being equal. With his experience and principle, and fundraising and organizational ability, he could wage a heck of a campaign.

Is Dobson considering it? When asked, he always says, "I'm not qualified. I'm not a politician." But that's not the same thing as saying no. And his colleague Gary Bauer has openly endorsed the idea. "He would be an unbelievable candidate with an immediate grassroots base of very loyal folks," says Bauer. "It would be an incredible development in American politics." That's right. Even more encouraging are the signs that the elites are nervous about the prospect. The *Washington Post* ran a "Style" section hit job on Dobson, the highest compliment any public figure can receive.

Rethinking the Libertarians

The overtaxed suburbanites in the Republican Party are not nearly as principled as the Christian right, but they have their own legitimate gripes about Dole. They know that he has been formed in an age of big government, and will never part from it. He's been behind every major tax increase since he entered office. His prattle about being shot while shooting Italians impresses no one these days. The overtaxed suburbanites—property owners angry that it takes two or more incomes to support a family these days—supported Steve Forbes during the campaign. If they are given a shove, they will bolt the party.

Ralph Reed praises the Social Gospel movement that brought us the income tax, World War I, prohibition, the New Deal, and the welfare state.

Every four years, the Libertarian Party claims their moment has finally arrived to get this vote, but somehow it's never true. There are many reasons for this, including the loser-style of the party leadership and the widespread impression they are leftwing on cultural issues. On other issues—for example, drug legalization—they haven't sold their plans in ways that can convince regular people.

Yet the Libertarian Party has always had a natural constituency. What it has not been blessed with are the right political conditions. Despite its persistent appeals to the Democrats, its potential supporters will come almost entirely from the Republicans.

In years' past, this Libertarian vote has been successfully funneled along with everyone else's. That meant a candidate who was able to make a credible promise to cut taxes. Sure, Dole (and probably Clinton) will come out for lower taxes, but who can believe it? All the conditions are right for a wave of defections from the Republican Party to the Libertarian Party.

This is made all the more likely by this year's nominee, best-selling financial writer Harry Browne. He is conservative in demeanor and generally holds to a hard-core, hard-right position on most issues. Under the influence of paleolibertarian Joe Sobran, and building on the heritage of Ron Paul, Browne has gradually shifted the focus of the party from left-libertarianism to a truly American politics centered on the 10th amendment. In Browne's view, the federal government should do no more than the Constitution allows it to, and all else should be left to the states.

This is not a new position for libertarians. Old Right anarchist Frank Chodorov, writing in the 1940s and 1950s, was among the

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country's most passionate advocates of states rights, as was Felix Morley, Leonard Read, and most every other libertarian thinker before the 1970s. Browne, continuing Ron Paul's work, is restoring the principle of federalism to the heart of American libertarian doctrine, just as Murray Rothbard hoped would happen. (Murray summed up his political philosophy: "universal rights, locally enforced.")

Such a message should also attract the Christian right should the U.S. Taxpayers not get its man. Browne is conservative in demeanor, and can probably pitch himself to religious conservatives if he focussed on it. The trouble is the people at the top. They have chosen to tout the party as explicitly "pro-choice" (not federalist) and to talk up the party's gay and drug angles.

Harry Browne, continuing Ron Paul's work, is restoring the principle of federalism to the heart of American libertarian doctrine.

Now that he's got the nomination, Browne should explain that he favors repealing Roe *v.* Wade, getting the federal courts entirely out of the abortion matter, and returning the issue to the states, as the Constitution requires. That position won't be satisfactory to all, but it could persuade many Christian rightists.

Browne already wins most presidential polls conducted on the Internet. Big deal? Not really, but even more powerful might be the talk radio audiences who regard him as their hero. He promises that as president, he would immediately dismantle the secret police agencies that are harassing gunowners. He would pardon all tax resisters. He would sell off federal assets, abolish the income tax, privatize social security, and in general give Washington bureaucracies a treatment right out of the movie, "Independence Day." Who couldn't love that part of the platform?

The Perot/Lamm Factor

That still leaves the other major class of alienated voters, politically independent working class whites. For the new Reform Party, that vote is ripe for the picking. Former Colorado Governor Richard Lamm is vying for that nomination, and the media are cheering him on in hopes that Perot will be driven out of his own party. Lamm is a good-government liberal with dozens of quirks. He's pretty good on foreign policy intervention and immigration, relatively good on entitlement spending, but bad on social issues, trade, and economics in general. In short, he fits the Reform Party model perfectly.

If he gets the nomination, he will immediately face two difficulties: money and media. He'll have to raise funds from people who don't have much to give, and he can forget about getting major corporate backing. Meanwhile, the media will lose interest in him as soon as Perot is out of the picture. Will he be able to overcome these problems? If this were the first time a third-party made a serious challenge, perhaps not. But 1992's presidential debates included Perot, so there's no reason why Lamm should be excluded this year. That automatically keeps him in the running.

I'm betting that Perot will be the nominee, however. He told Larry King that he would run if nominated by Reform Party members in their secret ballot.

Perot still scores 17% or more in the national polls, without having said a word on politics since his heroic if somewhat wrongheaded opposition to Nafta and Gatt. Perot, because of his performance in 1992, is eligible for $32 million in federal matching funds, or he could once again spend his own money. He's quirky, and just plain wrong on trade, but he's also an exciting and polarizing figure, and a genuine folk hero. If he is the nominee, he will definitely be in the debates once again.

Fired Up

Harry Browne is devoting a major part of his resources to getting into the debates, and he may succeed. But if that happens, the debates won't be able to exclude Nader or Dobson either. Imagine it: Dole and Clinton with four other people up there exposing them for the frauds they are. That could make for the most exciting political season in a half century, and nothing like what the power elite intended when they rigged up the "choice" of Clinton and Dole.

Let's consider one possible scenario. Clinton wins the electoral college hands down. But in the popular vote, he wins only a quarter of the voting public. Dole gets 20 percent, Dobson and the Reform Party each get 15 percent, Browne gets 10 percent, Nader gets 8 percent, and the remaining 7 percent is split among various independents and smaller parties.

The corrupt, rigged American system of party politics will have been smashed to smithereens, opening the way for an even wilder and more profitable election in 2000. Meanwhile, we get four more years to beat up on Clinton, mobilize a truly revolutionary mass movement against government in general, and pave the way for a new era dedicated to repudiating this vicious, bloody century.

Impossible? That's what people said about the fall of socialism in 1989. In today's volatile political climate, revolution may indeed at hand. One of the biggest barriers to liberty is the sordid two-

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party system, and it could soon go the way of the Berlin Wall. ■

The Poet Laureate of the Old Right

by Justin Raimondo

Before the invasion of the Buckleys, the Kristols, the Podhoretzes; before the fatuity of Jack Kemp and the platitudes of Bill Bennett; before conservatives were seduced by the temptations of Empire and the perpetual motion machine of a permanent war economy, there was the authentic and original conservative movement, what Murray Rothbard called the "Old Right."

In opposition to the looming nightmare of a second worldwide descent into barbarism, the Old Right held up the light of reasoned detachment from foreign squabbles, arguing that we would win the battle against Nazism in the trenches—and lose the war against national socialism at home. Under the banner of the America First Committee, the Old Right led the greatest anti-war movement in American history; great, not only in numbers, but in the sense of moral distinction and sheer courage.

As the Anglophiles, Communists, and militarists revved up the war propaganda machine, it became dangerous, especially for writers, to be known as "isolationists." Anyone who dared stand up for the traditional American foreign policy of nonintervention was smeared, attacked, driven out of gainful employment, and, as often as not, harassed by the FBI.

Every third-rate literary hack of a certain age has a story about McCarthy's "blacklist," but we hear not a word about the far more efficient and merciless blacklisting of an earlier time, when it was the left and its allies in FDR's White House who wielded the pen and the power.

Those few literary and political figures who dared stand up against that power were either destroyed, financially and politically, or else exiled to the margins: Charles A. Lindbergh, John T. Flynn, Albert Jay Nock, H.L. Mencken, Garet Garrett, Rose Wilder Lane, Senators Nye and Wheeler, and the anti-war populist wing of the Republican Party. Perhaps the most courageous and intransigent of these heroes was the poet Robinson Jeffers.

Born January 10, 1887, Jeffers' early years were spent in European boarding schools. In 1914, he discovered the natural beauty of the Central California coast, and settled in Carmel. Meanwhile, his first volume of poems, *Flagons and Apples* (1912) had appeared, followed by *Californians* (1916). With the publication of *Roan Stallion, Tamar, and Other Poems* (1925) and *The Women at Point Sur* (1927), he came into his own as a major American poet.

Jeffers was of that generation whose illusions were incinerated in the furnace of World War I. As he put it in *The Truce and the Peace,* written in November 1918:

> After all, after all we have
> endured, who has grown wise?
> . . .They have all meant well,
> Our enemies and the knaves at
> whom we've laughed,
> The liars, the clowns in office,
> the kings in hell
> They have all meant well in the
> main
> . . .They have made war,
> Conspired, oppressed, robbed,
> murdered, lied and lied,
> Meant well, played the loud
> fool...and star by star
> Winter Orion pursues the
> Pleiades
> In pale and huge parade, silence
> and peace.

Like many old-style liberals, Jeffers responded to the growing militarization and centralization of American society with a defiant reassertion of the native libertarian spirit. In "Shine, Republic," he wrote:

> The love of freedom has been the
> quality of Western man.
> There is a stubborn torch that
> flames from
> Marathon to Concord, its
> dangerous beauty
> binding three ages
> Into one time; the waves of
> barbarism and
> civilization have eclipsed but
> have never
> quenched it.

Jeffers was an American patriot, celebrating his country's republican virtues, just as he mourned their decline in "Shine, Perishing Republic," and "Shine, Empire." This alone explains why he is almost never taught in American universities. Jeffers' title as the most politically incorrect of all poets is secured by his ringing reaffirmation of the classical legacy of Western civilization—

> But in one noble passion we are
> one; and Washington,
> Luther, Tacitus, Aeschylus, one
> kind of man.
> And you, America, that passion
> made you.

Moral clarity and personal integrity were the bedrock of Jeffers' philosophy, and these qualities radiate from his poetry. His credo is summed up in the Introduction to the Random House edition of his *Collected Poetry*:

> Another formative principle
> came to me from a phrase of

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Nietzsche's: "The poets? The poets lie too much."...I decided not to tell lies in verse. Not to feign any emotion that I did not feel; not to pretend to believe in optimism or pessimism, or unreversible progress; not to say a thing because it was popular, or generally accepted, or fashionable in intellectual circles, unless I myself believed it; and not to believe easily.

Jeffers followed the tenets of his austere creed to the letter, in his art and his politics. In reply to a questionnaire from the fellow-traveling League of American Writers, he spoke up for the traditional American policy of strict nonintervention:

As to fascism: I would fight it in this country, but if the Italians want it that is their affair. The same goes for nazism. The same for communism, from which the others learned their methods.

In "Shine, Perishing Republic" (1941), Jeffers' vision is remarkably similar to that of the Old Right pamphleteer Garet Garrett, who, in his 1951 broadside *Rise of Empire,* observed that "we have crossed the boundary that lies between Republic and Empire." Jeffers declaims the same message with a similar tragic solemnity:

While this America settles in the mould of its vulgarity,
heavily thickening to empire,
And protest, only a bubble in the molten mass, pops and sighs out, and the mass hardens....

In "Blind Horses," he addresses his fellow intellectuals, most of whom were debating whether Stalin or Trotsky had cornered the market in Revolutionary Truth:

. . .Lenin has served the revolution,
Stalin presently begins to betray it. Why? For the sake of power, the Party's power, the state's Power, armed power, Stalin's power, Caesarean power.

But all this, says Jeffers, "is not quite a new world":

The ages like blind horses turning a mill tread their own hoof-marks. Whose corn's ground in that mill?

Of course, in today's political atmosphere, Jeffers would probably be accused of being a "conspiracy theorist" for daring to ask the forbidden question: *qui bono?* Who benefits from such a state of affairs? More evidence of the meaning of this line is in "Shine, Perishing Republic," where Jeffers cautions his children against the time when "the cities lie at the monster's feet." But who or what is the monster? In "Shiva," (1938) a hawk is

picking the birds out of our sky.
She has killed the pigeons of peace and security,
She has taken confidence from nations and men,
She is hunting the lonely heron of liberty.
She loads the arts with nonsense, she is very cunning,

This theme of organized evil—self-conscious, systematic, and relentlessly hunting "the lonely heron of liberty"—is the leitmotif of many of Jeffers' poems, starting in the immediate pre-war period. He knew what he was up against. As America prepared to fight its great war for capital 'D' Democracy, a poet who advised you to

Keep clear of the dupes that talk democracy
And the dogs that talk revolution,

was considered distinctly subversive if not downright seditious. His fate was sealed with the publication of *The Double Axe and Other Poems*, in 1948. Here is Jeffers at his polemical best: audacious, unrepentant, scathing. In "The Love and the Hate," Jeffers employs a device familiar to readers of his poems: a slain soldier returns from the dead to confront his family, his country, his fellow human beings. He haunts them for being:

the decent and loyal people of America,
Caught by their own loyalty, fouled, gouged and bled
to feed the power-hunger of the politicians and make trick fortunes
For swindlers and collaborators.

In "The Inhumanist," the author flays the moral pretensions of the victorious Allies:

And hang the men, Goering and all his paladins: why?
Why?
For losing the war....
What judges, what prosecutors, what a panel!

America was "the brutal meddler and senseless destroyer"; England was stained with an "old seamed and stinking blood-guilt"; the rulers of Russia were distinguished by their "cold dirty-clawed cruelty." The narrator of "The Inhumanist," an "old man with a double-bit axe"—clearly Jeffers himself—laughingly remarks:

By God, winners
and losers too, what hellhounds.

Jeffers' protest against the war crimes tribunals was a popular theme of the right-wing press at the time, particularly *Human Events*, and in such books as *Advance to Barbarism*, by F. J. P. Veale.

In "The Love and the Hate," Jeffers points the finger at his enemies, who are a virtual rogue's gallery of the Old Right's favorite villains:

the President And his paid mouths; and the radio-shouters, the writers,
the world-planners, the heavy

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bishops,
the England-lovers, the little
poets and college professors,
The seducers of boys, the pimps
of death...

It was inevitable, given the intellectual and political atmosphere, that *The Double Axe* would get Jeffers in trouble. In 1948, as the United States stood astride the world, the new avatars of Empire were proclaiming the advent of the American Century. In the feverish flush of an artificial prosperity fueled by inflation and preparations for war, Americans did not want to be told that it was all an illusion.

This *was* sedition, albeit of the literary variety, a high crime for which Jeffers was duly tried and convicted in the court of elite public opinion. Convicted, first of all, by his own publisher, who inserted a notice in the front of *The Double Axe* which amounted to the volume's first bad review. After noting that this was the fourteenth book of verse by Jeffers published by Random House, and touting their "close relationship," the publishers felt "compelled to go on record with its disagreement over some of the political views pronounced in this volume." After a few more lines of similar drivel, the Random House editor declared that "time alone is the court of last resort in the case of ideas on trial."

Random House also deleted ten poems from the original manuscript, and altered eight others. These were recovered and reprinted in a new edition of *The Double Axe*, edited and with an informative introduction by William Everson (1977).

"Wilson in Hell" imagines an encounter between Wilson and FDR. Wilson does all the talking:

...I
blundered into it
Through honest error...
. . .But you
Blew on the coal-bed, and when
it kindled you deliberately
Sabotaged every fire-wall that
even the men who denied
My hope had built. You have too
much murder on your hands.

Wilson complains that he

cannot understand the
Mercy
That permits us to meet in the
same heaven.—Or is this
my hell?

Many of the suppressed poems have as their theme the use and misuse of science in the service of war and the State. In "Pourvou Que Ca Doure," he exhorts us to

Look around you at civilization
decaying and sick: look
at science, corrupted
To be death's bawd; and art—
painting and sculpture,
that had some dignity—
Corrupted into the show-off
antics of an imbecile child:
and statecraft
Into the democratic gestures of a
gin-muddled butcher-boy...

Even if some were blunted, or missing, Jeffers' arrows met their marks—and how the critics howled!

Time magazine, the voice of the "American Century," decried *The Double Axe* as "a necrophilac nightmare." The Virginia Kirkus Service was properly horrified by this "puerile and violent rodomontade." In language that sounds remarkably familiar, and that might serve as a model of the classic smear technique employed against the Old Right in politics as well as poetry, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* accused Jeffers of being "unbalanced in his thinking...only the most devout followers of the right-wing nationalists, the lunatic fringe, and the most ardent Roosevelt-haters, could, after reading *The Double Axe*, welcome the return of Robinson Jeffers."

Close to his home turf, the *San Francisco Chronicle* threw up its hands in disgust at "one of the most powerful word-craftsmen of our time dipping his pen in international pus." "Hateful"" screeched the *Library Journal*; "a sorry exhibition" scolded the *New Republic*.

With the death of his wife, and a series of smears and attacks, notably by the second-rate poet and critic Kenneth Rexroth, Jeffers faded from the public scene. It would be ten years before another book, his final one, *Hungerfield and Other Poems*, was published, but this failed to revive his reputation. In spite of many requests from students and universities, Random House failed to issue any of his previous works, and these soon went out of print. In this context, the punk Rexroth felt safe in saying that "today young people simply do not read him."

The prophetess Cassandra was cursed by the gods with a burning vision of futurity; the price she paid for her wisdom was to endure universal disbelief. In Jeffers' ode to her, he asks:

...does it
matter, Cassandra,

RRR *The Rothbard-Rockwell Report.* (ISSN 1080-4420) is published monthly by the Center for Libertarian Studies, 875 Mahler Rd., Suite 150, Burlingame, CA 94010. (800) 325-7257. Second-Class Postage paid at Burlingame, CA 94010 and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *RRR*, P.O. Box 4091, Burlingame, CA 94011. *Editors:* Murray N. Rothbard (1926–1995) and Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr. *Contributing Editors:* David Gordon, Paul Gottfried, Hans-Hermann Hoppe, Michael Levin, and Justin Raimondo. *Publisher:* Burton S. Blumert. *Managing Editor:* Sybil Regan. Subscription: $49 for 12 issues. Single issue: $5. Copyright ©1996 by the Center for Libertarian Studies. All rights reserved. Unauthorized reproduction of this newsletter or its contents by xerography, facsimile, or any other means is illegal.

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Whether the people believe
Your bitter fountain? Truly men
hate the truth; they'd liefer
Meet a tiger on the road.
. . . Poor bitch, be wise.
No: you'll still mumble in a
corner a crust of truth, to men
and gods disgusting.—You and I,
Cassandra.

In the short run, Jeffers was right; no one listened. In the presumptuous and unprecedented "Note" appended to the Random House edition of *The Double Axe*, the anonymous editor declared that "time alone is the court of last resort in the case of ideas on trial."

Nearly half a century later, the verdict is in. The spirit of the Old Right, of the terrible "ism" so dreaded by the custodians of Respectable Thought—"isolationism," otherwise known as *peace*—is at last making a long-delayed comeback. In these days of UN wars, more than a few will heed Cassandra's warnings—and perhaps step back from the brink. ■

Gingrich the Strategist

by L.H.R., Jr.

The school lunch hysteria was among the fiascoes that doomed this Congress. I've wondered why it would have been among the first issues raised, and not, say, IMF subsidies or aid to Russia. Deliberate sabotage perhaps?

Taking on school lunches created an easy target for the media. They're taking food out of the mouths of babes! In any case, having raised the issue, they should have abolished the program as an unconstitutional subsidy to agriculture and the "poor."

The food lunch bust doomed Gingrich's reputation as a strategist and allowed the Republicans to drop all ideas of cuts in any spending program, no matter how objectionable. A year later, Gingrich is still smarting, but only now has he spoken frankly about his blunders.

"We said over and over again, it's a 4-and-a half percent increase," Gingrich told the *Washington Times*, but that wasn't enough. "I think in retrospect," he says, "the morning we had the school lunch program fight, we should have had every Republican go to a school lunch the following Friday or Monday and eat a school lunch with children with all the local news media walking them through in detail how we were saving the school lunch program."

Saving the school lunch program through increased spending? That's Gingrichism in a nutshell, although I can't remember any candidate running on that issue. Republicans are supposed to be against welfare. At least that's what the voters thought in 1994.

Gingrich likes to accuse Clinton of stealing Republican issues, but in fact, he's stealing Clinton's socialism. If some brave soul doesn't run against this bonehead for Speaker, he'll be missing the chance of a lifetime. ■

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ROTHBARD-ROCKWELL REPORT
P.O. Box 4091, Burlingame, CA 94011
(ISSN 1080-4420)

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